

NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF BERĀR.

BY

MRS. M. D. WRIGHT.

Birds began to interest me six years ago and for the first time since then I was able to spend fourteen consecutive months in one part of India. During this period—October '39 to December '40 my husband and I toured extensively and very frequently over all the districts of Berār. This afforded excellent opportunities for bird watching for a mere student though much of it had to be done through the car windows.

D'Abreu's list of the birds of the Central Provinces, Sálím Ali's Birds of Central India and Hewetson's Birds of Betul in the *Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* were of great interest as they dealt with those parts of Central India just north of Berār.¹ It seemed that the birds of the southern part of the C. P. deserved special mention as quite a number of species dubbed 'common in the C.P.' were not at all so in Berār, I therefore decided to keep as close a check as possible on bird occurrences, behaviour and movements just as they appeared to me. I am sure that the identifications are correct.

Included in Berār is the Mēlghāt, part of the Sātpūra range of hills in places over 3000 feet high. I only spent a few days in these hills in October, March, and May, but was able to observe enough to note some local migrations to and from the plains and differences in the bird life.

The plains of Berār are mostly flat cultivated fields with far fewer forested areas than the C. P. and high temperatures during the hot weather. The best tanks for water birds are Karunja, Kamgaon, Shegaon and Wādali.

All the identifications have been made from Hugh Whistler's *Handbook of Indian Birds*, that invaluable guide for students of Indian ornithology whether serious or not. Also a few from the 'Fauna.' There has been no murder done, field glasses sufficing for what the eye cannot see. Notes on breeding are badly lacking in this list. Opportunities for searching for nests were few, and bird life seemed strangely scarce during the rains as compared with other parts of India.

Races have not been dealt with and there are other species whose identities I could not be certain of and therefore have not mentioned. There are no new discoveries; but as Hugh Whistler mentions in the foreword of his book only by reports of those interested in the bird life of their own localities can the bird life

¹ See also 'The Hyderabad State Ornithological Survey' (*J. B. N. H. S.*, Vol. xxxvi, No. 2, et seq.) for birds of the area adjoining Berār on the south. Eds.

of India really be known. In trying to follow out his suggestion I have spent a most delightful year in Berār.

1. **Corvus macrorhynchos.** The Jungle Crow.

Common resident. Few and shy in towns and villages, plentiful in wilder areas. Flocks feeding on fruit in Chikalda in March, and on groundnut crops in the plains in September. Nests occupied from January to April.

2. **Corvus splendens.** The House Crow.

Common resident in the plains. Gives place to Jungle Crow in forested areas and Mēlghāt, though seen in those parts. Large flocks bathe in the late evening at edges of rivers and tanks in most populated parts before going to roost. Feeding on heads of juar in November. Many nests built in January, but breeding began about February.

3. **Dendrocitta vagabunda.** The Indian Tree Pie.

Fairly common in the plains in winter, favouring roadside trees, groves, and forested areas. In the Mēlghāt in November 1939 it was one of the commonest species and very noisy; in March they were still abundant in small parties and pairs, feeding on fruit, quarrelling and courting. In May comparatively scarce and quiet, and in October 1940 plentiful again.

4. **Parus major.** The Southern Grey Tit.

In the plains, usually single throughout winter. Sometimes in small parties. Rather scarce. Absent for hot weather and rains. Common resident in the Mēlghāt where they were seen in parties in November, and pairs in March and May.

5. **Machlophus xanthogenys.** Yellow-cheeked Tit.

Uncommon in the plains. Sometimes seen in winter at Akot and Ellichpore at the foot of the Mēlghāt and in the wooded tracts of Yeotmal district. Abundant resident of the Mēlghāt where in November they were in parties with White Eyes and Grey Tits and in pairs in May when breeding.

6. **Sitta castanea.** Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch.

Distribution very localised. January 31st 1940 Ellichpur a single bird on a Banyan tree in fruit with many other birds in the rest-house compound. Common resident in Kandala Reserve forest, Yeotmal District; seen here in January, April, and June. Usually in company with the Indian Pygmy Woodpecker, White-browed Fantail Flycatcher, and Minivets. *Sitta frontalis* never seen.

7. **Turdoides somervillei.** Jungle Babbler.

Common resident in all the more wooded parts of the plains, and abundant in the Mēlghāt. Absent from open country, cultivation and towns.

8. **Argya caudata.** Common Babbler.

Resident in localised areas in the plains. Parties were usually seen at Balapur in scrub country by the river, the bushy surrounds of Khamgaon tank, and in areas at the foot of the Mēlghāt. Community trilling at roosting time seemed a marked characteristic.

9. **Argya malcolmi.** Large Grey Babbler.

Common resident of the plains. The common babbler of open country and towns throughout the province. Gives place to the Jungle Babbler in wooded parts. At Chikalda on May 27th 1940 a party on fairly open ground, there were none seen here in November and March.

10. *Pomatorhinus horsfieldii*. Deccan Scimitar Babbler.

Seen only in the Mēlghāt. March 21st 1940 just below the Chikalda plateau a party of two males and three or four females by a stream. May 28th Chikalda, a pair in lantana bushes.

11. *Dumetia hyperythra*. Rufous-bellied Babbler.

Was not seen in the plains. November 39, March 40, none in Chikalda; in May, very common in large parties at edges of forest areas and ravines; in October a few parties seen, but noticeably fewer.

12. *Chrysomma sinensis*. Yellow-eyed Babbler.

Not common, several in Amraoti in the long grass of a swampy area in January. Occasionally seen in most parts of the province. Probably resident.

13. *Alcippe poiocephala*. Quaker Babbler.

Was not seen in the plains. A party probably seen in Chikalda in May; but I am not certain.

14. *Ægithina tiphia*. Common Iora.

Common resident of the plains and Mēlghāt. Some seen in Kandala forest reserve in January appeared to have bright green upper plumage.

15. *Chloropsis jerdoni*. Jerdon's Chloropsis.

Uncommon in the plains. In December they were very common round Nagpur, and at the same time conspicuously scarce in Berār. Common in the Melghat.

16. *Molpastes cafer*. Red-vented Bulbul.

Common resident. From September to April in cheerful parties round trees in fruit and flower. Pairing off at the end of May. Many nests in June and July. One nest was built in a shrub at the edge of Buldana Circuit house. The parents entered and left the nest when no one was looking. It was immediately above last year's old nest and the pair are reported to build there every year. In Chikalda this bulbul occurs with the Red-whiskered bulbul, both species joining forces. They favoured lantana and cactus.

17. *Otocompsa jocosa*. Red-whiskered Bulbul.

Not seen in the plains. Common resident all over the higher parts of the Mēlghāt. In November in parties with Red-vented Bubluls. Although they could be heard all day long, they remained very much within the undergrowth. In pairs in March and May. The White-browed Bulbul was not seen here; though it occurs in Nagpur.

18. *Saxicola caprata*. Pied Bush Chat.

Resident of the plains and Mēlghāt in all types of open country. *Saxicola caprata bicolor* with the whole abdomen white is a winter visitor. At the beginning of the hot weather the number of bush chats greatly decreased. Earliest date seen, October 16th; about this time there were many males with rusty-coloured abdomens, one was rufous from neck downwards.

19. *Saxicola torquata*. Stone Chat.

Common winter visitor to the plains. Rather scarce in the Mēlghāt. Latest date seen April 1st. Earliest, September 10th. Those seen on this date and for about a week after were few and far between and all females. By September 24th they were generally common and there were many males. Full winter plumage did not appear till January.

20. *Phoenicurus ochrurus*. Black Redstart.

Common winter visitor. April 3rd the latest date for the majority. On April 11th a solitary female was seen, no more after this date. September 17th earliest date: by October 1st generally common, especially in Yeotmal district.

21. *Cyanosylvia svecica*. Blue Throat.

Fairly common winter visitor to the plains. Seen skulking in damp localities. None seemed to attain perfect plumage.

22. *Saxicoloides fulicata*. Indian Robin.

Common resident.

23. *Copsychus saularis*. Magpie Robin.

Common resident of the Mēlghāt where at the beginning of May there was much singing and courting. Breeding by the end of May. In the plains they were common in winter, and very scarce in the hot weather and rains. Regions round tanks and roadside avenues were their favourite haunts.

24. *Turdus simillimus*. Nilgiri Blackbird.

Absent from plains. Common summer visitor to Mēlghāt; some are probably resident. Chikalda November 39, none seen, in March a few skulking very quietly in May in many parts of Mēlghāt they were abundant and very conspicuous. They did not appear to be breeding. Pairs would collect into parties that fed on the ground in shady patches. The usual call a deep chuck! chuck!; probably bred during the rains. In October, a very small party was deep among the undergrowth. Another Blackbird occurs in Chikalda which is probably the Malabar Whistling Thrush. It was not nearly so common.

25. *Monticola solitaria*. Blue Rock Thrush.

Winter visitor to the plains. Seen in most parts as a solitary bird usually perched on buildings or behaving like a flycatcher in wooded areas and roadside avenues. Latest date seen the last week in April at Basim, earliest October 6th Amraoti.

26. *Siphia parva*. Red-breasted Flycatcher.

Winter visitor to plains and Mēlghāt. It is common in Chikalda and in the more wooded localities of the plains. Very few seemed to have much red on the breast. By May they had disappeared from Chikalda and had returned in October.

27. *Muscicapula tickellæ*. Tickell's Blue Flycatcher.

Fairly common as a winter visitor to the plains in wooded parts, September 19th Akot earliest date. Common resident of Mēlghāt. Its song was the first to be heard at dawn. Probably breeding in May.

28. *Eumyias thalassina*. Verditer Flycatcher.

Winter visitor to the plains in wooded parts, only occasionally seen. In the Mēlghāt it is a winter visitor. In November 39 it was amazingly common sometimes being in small parties which I have never seen before. On March 23rd there was a pair in one of their favourite haunts though the rest had disappeared. In May I thought I saw a pair but might have been mistaken.

29. *Culicicapa ceylonensis*. Grey-headed Flycatcher.

An uncommon winter visitor. January 3rd Ellichpur, solitary with many other birds about a Banyan tree in fruit in the Dak Bungalow compound. I probably saw the Brown Flycatcher in Chikalda in October, but have never seen the Black-naped Flycatcher in Berār.

30. *Tchitrea paradisi*. Paradise Flycatcher.

Few and far between in the plains during the winter; about April 3rd they increased somewhat in the north of the district, very few in full plumage.

31. *Leucocirca aureola*. White-browed Fantail Flycatcher.

Common resident of the plains in wooded parts and roadside avenues. Abundant in Kandala forest area in mixed hunting parties in winter, in pairs in summer. Never seen in the Mēlghāt.

32. *Leucocirca pectoralis*. Spotted Fantail Flycatcher.

Common resident of the Mēlghāt. Never seen in the plains.

33. *Lanius excubitor*. Great Grey Shrike.

Resident of the plains, fairly common in very open country. Breeding in April and May. Two nests had lumps of cotton in the structure. Absent from the Mēlghāt.

34. *Lanius vittatus*. Bay-backed Shrike.

The commonest shrike. A local migration takes place between the plains and Mēlghāt. All winter and till the end of March when courting began they were extremely common, then they very noticeably decreased in numbers. On May the 4th they had greatly increased, in the Mēlghāt and breeding was in progress. Comparatively few seemed to breed in the plains. At the beginning of September they began to return to the plains and by the end of the month were in full force in all parts. In October there were many in immature plumage.

35. *Lanius schach ethronotus*. Rufous-backed Shrike.

Rather less common than the Great Grey Shrike. A winter visitor to the plains. Probably more common in the Mēlghāt. *L. s. caniceps* with less rufous on the upper parts was quite common round Nagpur in December, but was not seen in Berār. Absent for hot weather and rains.

36. *Lanius cristatus*. The Brown Shrike.

An uncommon winter visitor. The Black-headed Shrike was not found.

37. *Tephrodornis pondicerianus*. Common Wood Shrike.

Common resident, in wooded parts and roadside avenues. January 19th Kandala forest a party of about seven were with a hunting association. In March they were in pairs and whistling very pleasantly.

38. *Pericrocotus peregrinus*. Little Minivet.

Common resident in fairly well wooded parts. In January, in Kandala forests abundant in hunting associations. In March always seen in pairs. March 29th the first small family party. September in the Mēlghāt several family parties were about, the full-grown fledglings still being fed by parents. I did not see the short-billed or Scarlet Minevets.

39. *Lalage sykesi*. Black-headed Cuckoo-Shrike.

Rather uncommon. Usually seen singly. At Chikalda in May. At Amraoti on October 10th when four young birds were perched close together on wire fencing near the road.

40. *Graucalus javensis*. Large Cuckoo-Shrike.

Common in the plains and Mēlghāt. Locally migratory. November '39 Mēlghāt not noticeable. Winter plains—common, in small noisy parties with other birds round bur and peplu trees. March Mēlghāt mostly in pairs. A party of six were hawking insects. May Mēlghāt in pairs, no parties. Absent

during the rains. October 14th Yeotmal seen for the first time since the end of the hot weather.

41. *Dicrurus macrocercus*. King Crow.

Common resident of the plains. In the Mēlghāt they were commonest about March.

42. *Dicrurus longicaudatus*. Indian Grey Drongo.

Absent from the plains. In the Mēlghāt during winter they were in noisy parties among the tree tops. In March in pairs and less noticeable. Very scarce in May.

43. *Dicrurus coccyzoides*. White-bellied Drongo.

Locally migratory. Winter '39 fairly common all over plains usually solitary in more wooded areas than the King Crow. Absent from the Mēlghāt. March '40 absent from the plains, quite common in the Mēlghāt from the lower slopes upwards, still solitary but one or two pairs seen. May. Mēlghāt, common in pairs. Sept. Mēlghāt, still in pairs whistling beautifully and courting. Absent from the plains. October 14th earliest date seen in the plains.

44. *Dissemurus paradiseus*. Large Racket-tailed Drongo.

Not seen in the plains though there probably were a few in Buldana and Yeotmal districts. One in the Mēlghāt in May. Rather scarce.

45. *Acrocephalus stentoreus*. Indian Great Reed Warbler.

A winter visitor. Seen on two occasions only in December and January in thick clumps of reeds near Akola and Wadali tank Amraoti. A much smaller bird looking just like it was in the same patch of reeds and may have been Blyth's Reed Warbler.

46. *Cisticola juncidis*. Fantail Warbler.

In December there were several in long grass bordering Wadali tank; one mounted into the air in jerks with a clicking sound followed by a headlong dive down.

47. *Orthotomus sutorius*. Indian Tailor Bird.

Common resident. There are probably two races. Some seen in the plains had very richly-coloured upper plumage, these were seen at Pusad in January, Amraoti and Buldana in March. Others at the same time of year retained their dull plumage, these were in the majority.

48. *Franklina gracilis*. Franklin's Wren Warbler.

Common in the plains in winter. None were seen during the rains. Very common resident in the Mēlghāt. Here they were in large parties throughout the winter till the end of May when they had paired off. They had complete dark pectoral bands. Coffee and Lantana bushes were favoured hunting grounds. In October '40 Buldana district a small party included a fledgling which was being fed. They still retained breeding plumage.

49. *Sylvia hortensis*. Eastern Orphean Warbler.

A winter visitor. In January near Jalgaon a party hunted with Rosy Pastors among bushes in fruit in open country. March 25th Wadali Tank Amraoti was the latest date seen.

50. *Sylvia curruca*. Lesser White Throat.

Winter visitor. Earliest date October 3rd at Yeotmal.

51. *Phylloscopus trochiloides*. Greenish Willow Wren.

Winter visitor. Seen in Kandala forest reserve in January. Not common.

52. *Phylloscopus inornatus*. Yellow-browed Warbler.

Winter visitor. Fairly common in the plains, common in the Mēlghāt. Earliest date October 3rd Yeotmal. I may be confusing it with another warbler. It had a pleasant whistle which was uttered usually from within a bush.

53. *Prinia socialis*. The Ashy Wren Warbler.

Surprisingly scarce. Only once seen during the hot weather by a stream near Jalgaon. None seen in the Mēlghāt. It is reported as being a common resident in the C.P.

54. *Prinia inornata*. Indian Wren Warbler.

Common round damp localities and cultivation. Another Warbler very similar in appearance appeared on September 12th at the edges of Khamgaon tank; they were in fairly large parties flitting about among grasses and weeds, sometimes settling together in a bush. After this date they could always be found there. Several other small Warblers were common all over Berār in roadside trees, specially Babul: but I am not certain of their identities.

55. *Oriolus oriolus*. Golden Oriole.

Common about roadside trees, and trees in fruit. In the plains there was a marked decrease during the hot weather and rains. In the Mēlghāt they were common in March and May.

56. *Oriolus xanthornus*. Black-Headed Oriole.

None seen in the plains. Fairly common in the Mēlghāt where they were in pairs in March. They sometimes joined with pairs of Golden Orioles at a fruity meal. No melodious calls, only those like a crow with a high-pitched voice.

57. *Pastor roseus*. Rosy Pastor.

A common winter visitor especially to the plains. From November 39-January 40 they seemed to keep to the west and north-western districts and were seen in large and small parties round cultivation often with other mynahs. Plumage was very obscure and bedraggled then. By the end of February when *Butea frondosa* was in full bloom their numbers seemed to increase; greatly and large parties could be seen and heard all over Berār wherever the trees were. Plumage was now cleaner and tidier. Latest date March 30th Yeotmal. They disappeared suddenly. Earliest date September 23rd, Wadali tank, Amraoti. After this date they were often seen in all parts of Berār.

58. *Sturnus vulgaris*. Starling.

A solitary bird on December 31st near Wadali tank Amraoti. This may have been a straggler from a small flock. No other occurrences.

59. *Sturnia malabarica*. Grey-headed Mynah.

Only once seen October 18th '40. Quite a large flock which had joined forces with common and Brahminy Mynahs and Rosy Pastors. They perched on bare trees having fed on an orchard.

60. *Acridotheres tristis*. Common Mynah.

Very common resident of the plains. Locally migratory to the Mēlghāt. November '39 Mēlghāt, Not one to be seen.

| | | |
|-----------|---|--|
| March '40 | „ | In large flocks everywhere, the most abundant species. |
| May '40 | „ | Still very common but pairing off. |
| October | „ | None. |

During the hot weather and rains the numbers in the plains decreased slightly only and breeding began in June, in some cases two broods were

raised. By the end of September they had acquired new plumage having looked very ragged at the beginning of the month.

61. *Temenuchus pagodarum*. Brahminy Mynah.

Common resident. Searching for nesting sites began in mid-May, breeding in June. Some pairs used the old nest hole as a home long after the chicks had gone.

The pied mynah which I noted as being fairly common in localised patches in and round Nagpur was quite absent from Berar. Neither were the Bank Mynah or the Jungle Mynah seen.

62. *Ploceus philippinus*. Baya Weaver Bird.

Common all over the plains during the breeding season, but not noticed at any other time. There were scattered nest colonies but no weavers till the first week of July when a small party of males appeared at an old colony, and had begun a few nests. Breeding was not in full swing till August. They had gone again by the end of September.

63. *Uroloncha malabarica*. White-throated Munia.

Common resident. February and March was the general breeding time. By the end of March small family parties were about, after this they were seldom seen in pairs.

64. *Carpodacus erythrinus*. Common Rose Finch.

Scarce. A small flock near Wadali tank Amraoti at the end of November 1940.

65. *Gymnorhis xanthocollis*. Yellow-throated Sparrow.

Very common in winter in flocks. They began coming in about November. From the end of February their numbers greatly decreased. In March, April and May several pairs were breeding in wooded areas. They were not seen at all during the rains.

66. *Passer domesticus*. House Sparrow.

As usual in the plains. None seen in the higher parts of the Melghat as Chikakda.

67. *Emberiza huttoni*. Grey-necked Bunting.

I identified this bird from the 'Fauna'; it was the only description that fitted it exactly. Common winter visitor in parties on dry stony areas and also near margins of tanks. Latest date April 11th. Earliest October 5th when a small party were on the same bit of stony scrub as they had favoured the year before. I have seen no bird answering to the description of the White-capped Bunting.

68. *Emberiza melanocephala*. Black-headed Bunting.

Common winter visitor in flocks to the plains. Feeding on ripe juar in December, and wheat in January. The numbers greatly increased from March which was probably the spring passage north. By the end of March most of them had departed. A few remained on till the beginning of April. Earliest date October 3rd '40 a small flock in Yeotmal District.

69. *Emberiza bruniceps*. Red-headed Bunting.

Seen in March only. March 14th with Black-headed Buntings round an enclosure where wheat was being husked and later a small party grazing by themselves at Mekah. None seen after March 26th. They must have been on passage.

70. *Melophus lathami*. Crested Bunting.

Resident. Quite common in North Berār in localised bushy patches. They were always to be found in a certain area near Akot. Appeared to be very scarce in the rest of Berār.

71. *Riparia chinensis*. Indian Sand Martin.

All the year round about tanks and rivers. Also at Chikalda over Bir Talau in March.

72. *Riparia concolor*. Dusky Crag Martin.

Common about buildings and ruins. At Balapur in February a pair were busy lining their nest built on a ledge of a ruined shrine with downy white feathers.

73. *Hirundo rustica*. European Swallow.

Winter visitor. Quite often seen with other swallows over tanks.

74. *Hirundo smithii*. Wire-tailed Swallow.

Common resident. In parties in winter hawking over tanks and perched on telegraph wires near water. In January the majority had shed their wire tails.

75. *Hirundo daurica*. Red-rumped Swallow.

Common. All winter in the plains they sailed low over the crops in the mornings and evenings. In the early mornings they were perched in very large numbers on telegraph wires. Compared to districts round Poona, swallows in winter kept much more to their own species when perched on telegraph wires. Very few collections of mixed swallows were seen. Another swallow often seen over water specially in winter was probably the Cliff Swallow, though I am not certain of this.

76. *Motacilla alba*. White Wagtail.

Common winter visitor. Latest date March 25th. The first Wagtail to leave. Earliest date October 10th. They came in suddenly and were seen in many parts during the next three or four days.

77. *Motacilla maderaspatensis*. Large Pied Wagtail.

Resident of the plains. Breeding in the hot weather.

78. *Motacilla cinerea*. Grey Wagtail.

Fairly common winter visitor. Seen singly about streams. Latest date April 10th. Earliest date October 12th in Buldana district.

79. *Motacilla flava*. Yellow Wagtail.

Fairly common winter visitor to the plains in flocks small and large. Latest date, a pair on May 2nd. Earliest date September 25th at Risode, a party of a dozen in attendance on grazing cattle. The next day a large flock were bathing in the river at Nandura.

80. *Motacilla citreola*. Yellow-headed Wagtail.

A frequent winter visitor. Several were always to be seen round the margins of Karunja tank in winter. At the beginning of March two or three pairs arrived at Wadali tank Amraoti for the first time, the males having the complete head to the nape bright yellow. Last date April 30th.

81. *Anthus hodgsoni*. Indian Tree Pipit.

Common winter visitor. At the end of March they had gone from the plains but parties were common from the lower slopes of the Mēlghāt up to Chikalda. By May they had gone.

82. *Anthus rufulus*. Indian Pipit.

Common winter visitor. Flocks and small parties on grass land and cultivated fields.

There were several other species of Pipits which I was not able to identify definitely. One is much larger, another has a very heavily streaked breast. This Pipit was absent throughout the hot weather and rains returning in September. Only one kind remained, a few of these were round Kamgaon tank in May.

83. *Alauda gulgula*. Little Skylark.

Common. On March 18th a large number were running about the edge of Wadali tank with Grey-necked Buntings.

84. *Calandrella brachydactyla*. Short-toed Lark.

Common winter visitor to the plains, more noticeable in the southern parts of Berār round Basim and Risode. Their flights over arid patches of ground were most fascinating. Earliest date October 10th at Basim.

85. *Mirafra erythroptera*. Red-winged Bush Lark.

Common resident in the plains. All the year round on the same patches of bare stony ground or perching on fences.

86. *Ammomanes phoenicura*. Rufous-tailed Lark.

Common in the plains. During the spring and hot weather they were one of the most abundant species seen along the roads, mostly in pairs. As soon as the rains broke they seemed to disappear, very few were seen. On September 20th there were a few roadside parties and by the end of the month large parties were common.

87. *Eremopteryx grisea*. Ashy-crowned Finch-Lark.

Common resident. Small flocks in winter.

88. *Zosterops palpebrosa*. White Eye.

Common resident of the Mēlghāt. Fairly common in the winter in the plains in hunting associations about wooded areas and trees in flower and fruit. None noticed during the hot weather and rains.

89. *Cinnyris asiaticus*. Purple Sunbird.

Common resident. The only Sunbird seen in Berār. October 26th '39 at Amraoti males were just coming in to breeding plumage. In March there were many nests. By April parties were delightfully active over Siris blossom. One nest had an egg in May. There were several Flower Peckers, mostly in the Mēlghāt. Among them was probably the Thick-billed and Tickell's Flower Peckers.

90. *Pitta brachyura*. Indian Pitta.

Absent from the plains. In May several skulking in lantana bushes and cactus in Chikalda. They probably bred in the Mēlghāt. None in the winter.

91. *Dryobates mahrattensis*. Mahratta Woodpecker.

Fairly common resident, seen singly throughout winter, very often among Babul trees that fringe the tanks and in wooded areas with hunting associations. In March in the Kandala forest reserve, they were in pairs.

92. *Brachypternus benghalensis*. Golden-backed Woodpecker.

Fairly common in wooded areas and roadside avenues. One in the middle of Amraoti town with a party of grey-headed Barbblers. Very few were seen between April and September.

93. **Dryobates hardwickii.** Indian Pygmy Woodpecker.

Fairly common in wooded parts. Usually in company with mixed hunting parties. In pairs in March.

94. **Thereceryx zeylanicus.** Green Barbet.

Absent from the plains. Common resident of the Mēlghāt.

95. **Xantholæa hæmacephala.** Coppersmith.

Common resident. Nesting in March.

96. **lynx torquilla.** Wryneck.

Uncommon winter visitor. January 26th at Basim a solitary bird was chased by a Bay-backed Shrike, it squeaked like a muskrat and wore an air of embarrassment. December 10th at Amraoti, also solitary trying to hide in a bush.

97. **Coracias bengalensis.** Blue Jay.

Common resident of the plains. Courting in February, the same behaviour was noted again in November.

98. **Merops orientalis.** Green Bee-eater.

Common in the plains and locally migratory. Throughout the winter they were abundant in parties everywhere. Pairs in the hot weather. At the beginning of the rains they were missing. In September they began to return and by November they were as abundant as ever.

99. **Merops superciliosus.** Blue-tailed Bee-eater.

In localised patches. April 10th Kamgaon tank a large flock was hawking red dragonflies, they had not been there either in February or March—after this they could be seen in every month in the same locality. A few were noted in April and September at Balapur and Akot.

100. **Ceryl rudis.** Pied Kingfisher.

Fairly common resident. About rivers and streams, very often in pairs.

101. **Alcedo atthis.** Common Kingfisher.

Frequent but the least common Kingfisher.

102. **Halcyon smyrnensis.** White-breasted Kingfisher.

Fairly common resident. Very noisy in March.

103. **Tockus birostris.** Grey Hornbill.

Common and very often in parties in winter. None seen during the rains.

104. **Upupa epops.** Hoopoe.

Common, a marked decrease in numbers during the hot weather and rains. In March there were a few in the Mēlghāt where I had not noticed any during the winter.

105. **Micropus affinis.** Indian Swift.

Common resident; though few in the Mēlghāt. In flocks over towns and villages. The Alpine Swift probably occurs in the Mēlghāt; some were hawking over a tank in the Fort at Chikalda in November, but I am not sure of their identity.

106. *Cypsiurus batasiensis*. Palm Swift.

Seen here and there near palm trees.

107. *Hemiprocne coronata*. Indian Crested Swift.

Common resident in certain localities only. In Kandala forest reserve Yeotmal district in a certain valley they could be seen at any time. Sailing overhead in parties in winter in pairs in March when they were probably breeding as they spent much of their time perching. In Chikalda small parties hawked over Bir Talau in March, May and October.

108. *Caprimulgus asiaticus*. Indian Nightjar.

Common in June. In Kandala Forest Reserve Yeotmal District; two barking deer dashed straight towards me being fiercely chased by a nightjar, it froze to a rock on seeing me. This was in broad daylight.

109. *Cuculus canorus*. Cuckoo.

Fairly common in April and May. Neither heard nor seen at any other time of year.

110. *Hierococcyx varius*. Common Hawk Cuckoo.

Common from May till the end of September. Heard for the first time in Berar on May 5th at Ghatang in the Mēlghāt. Towards the end of July they were very noisy all through the night, very much quieter in August and after a final outburst, silent from mid-September though frequently seen till about the end of the month.

111. *Cacomantis merulinus*. Indian Plaintive Cuckoo.

Only once seen and never heard, a solitary bird on November 17th on the Buldana Ghat.

112. *Clamator jacobinus*. Pied-crested Cuckoo.

Erratic occurrence. Quite common in October till the beginning of November '39 near cultivation. The earliest reappearance was reported by Mr. R. Hill at Buldana on June 15th when he saw a pair courting. On June 21st a pair in the Kandala forest reserve were also courting. No more were seen when I left the province in December.

113. *Eudynamis scolopaceus*. Koel.

Earliest date February 1st none had been seen or heard from October '39. On April 5th '40 the first call was heard at Amraoti and they were frequently seen and heard till the end of July. After this there were no more appearances or calls except for a pair at Kamgaon in November.

114. *Centropus sinensis*. Crow Pheasant.

Common resident in the plains. During the hot months of April and May they spent much time stalking in pairs about muddy edges of tanks. On September 19th at Akot a bird was sitting on its nest.

115. *Psittacula krameri*. Green Parrakeet.

The most common Parrakeet. Mating in February.

116. *Psittacula cyanocephala*. Blossom-headed Parrakeet.

Resident and quite common in wooded parts, though not generally round towns and open country in the plains. Teak and Salai forests are favourite haunts. In pairs in January.

The large Parrakeet must occur but I have not noticed it. A very small Parrakeet probably occurs, which I have only caught rapid glimpses of, on one occasion by the road near Ellichpur and at Khatkali in the Mēlghāt.

117. *Strix ocellatum*. Mottled Wood Owl.
At Buldana in a wooded area.
118. *Athene brama*. Spotted Owl.
Common resident. A pair lived in a tree near our bungalow. They mated in March and brought up the family in a hole in the tree trunk.
Later the whole family continued to live there amusing us with their domestic squabbles. Several other owls occur, including one very large one with conspicuous ears, but I was not able to identify them.
119. *Sarcogyps calvus*. King Vulture.
Frequent. A party of four on a roadside carcass and often seen in pairs.
120. *Pseudogyps bengalensis*. White-backed Vulture.
The most common Vulture.
121. *Gyps fulvus*. Griffon Vulture.
Quite often with White-backed Vultures.
122. *Neophron percnopterus*. Scavenger Vulture.
Too common.
123. *Butastur teesa*. White-eyed Buzzard.
Common. Probably migratory as it was not noticed between April 11th and early September. Often near tanks.
124. *Spilornis cheela*. Crested Serpent Eagle.
An immature bird seen at Chikalda. None in the plains.
125. *Haliastur indus*. Brahminy Kite.
Common plains resident round tanks. Only once seen in the Mēlghāt when two or three were perched on boulders of a forest stream in May
126. *Milvus migrans*. Common Pariah Kite.
Very common about habitations. Many families reared in March.
127. *Circus æruginosus*. Marsh Harrier.
Rather uncommon. In winter, solitary near tanks or streams.
128. *Circus macrourus*. Pale Harrier.
Common winter visitor. Usually single flying low over cultivation. Latest date April 4th at Basim. Earliest September 10th in the same locality.
129. *Astur badius*. Shikra.
Fairly common.
130. *Falco chicquera*. Red-headed Merlin.
Has only been noticed on a few occasions.
131. *Falco tinnunculus*. Kestrel.
Common in winter. Latest date March 17th. There were several other members of this order which I was unable to identify with any certainty.
132. *Crocopus phœnicopterus*. Common Green Pigeon.
Common resident of the Mēlghāt. In large flocks at Chikalda and Khatkali. Rather lacking in the plains, in May a pair were near a tank in Amraoti District.

133. *Columba livia*. Blue Rock Pigeon.

Common resident round old buildings. A large flock grazing on a fallow field near Ghatang in the Mēlghāt in November.

134. *Streptopelia orientalis*. Rufous Turtle Dove.

Appears to be absent from the plains. November '39 Chikalda, none. March 21st-25th '40 abundant on the plateau and nearby slopes in flocks that fed on the ground and flew up into trees when disturbed, being very shy. It was the most common species of dove at this time. May '40 Chikalda, none. October '40 Chikalda, none.

135. *Streptopelia chinensis*. Spotted Dove.

Common resident, more so in wooded areas, less in open country.

136. *Streptopelia senegalensis*. Little Brown Dove.

Common resident of open country.

137. *Streptopelia risoria*. Indian Ring Dove.

Common resident of open country.

138. *Ænopenopelia tranquebarica*. Red Turtle Dove.

The least common of the doves though frequently seen. Seldom noticed during the rains.

139. *Pterocles exustus*. Common Sandgrouse.

Resident in the plains.

140. *Pavo cristatus*. Common Peafowl.

Frequently seen in the early mornings and late evenings in wooded parts.

141. *Gallus sonnerati*. Grey Jungle Fowl.

Common resident of the Mēlghāt. Lantana bushes were the favourite cover. In March the cocks crowed to each other from cover to cover all day long. The Red Jungle Fowl appeared to be absent, but once I thought I saw a cock.

142. *Galloperdix spadicea*. Red Spur Fowl.

Common in the Mēlghāt in March and are probably resident.

143. *Coturnix coturnix*.
C. coromandelicus.
Perdicula asiatica. } Quails.

144. *Francolinus pondicerianus*. Grey Partridge.

Common.

145. *Gallinula chloropus*. Water Hen.

Occasionally skulking at the edges of tanks and streams. No White-breasted Water-hen were seen.

146. *Porphyrio poliocephalus*. Purple Coot.

Uncommon. The only occasion seen was on July 9th at Kamgaon tank, a pair on a sand spit fringed by reeds.

147. *Fulica atra*. Common Coot.

Common in flocks in winter on all the tanks. No cranes were seen, though the Sarus Crane appeared common in Nagpur District.

148. *Cursorius coromandellicus*. Indian Courser.

Several times during April solitary birds were sipping water at the edges of Wadali tank Amraoti.

149. *Hydrophasianus chirurgus*. Pheasant-tailed Jacana.

Fairly common resident on weedy patches of tanks.
The Bronze-winged Jacana which was very common in Nagpur District did not occur in Berār.

150. *Esacus recurvirostris*. Great Stone Plover.

Uncommon. On January 19th at Karunja tank a solitary bird was wading in shallow water near a mud spit with many small waders. No Stone Curlews.

151. *Lobivanelus indicus*. Red-wattled Lapwing.

Common resident near tanks. In quite large numbers in winter.

152. *Lobipluvia malabarica*. Yellow-wattled Lapwing.

Less common than the Red-wattled. In April and May many pairs on a rough stony area in Amraoti. They must have been breeding.

153. *Charadrius dubius*. Little Ring Plover.

Common about tanks and rivers. Comparatively few were noticed during the hot weather and rains.

154. *Leucopoliis alexandrinus*. Kentish Plover.

A few at Karunja tank during the winter running about the edges with Little Ring Plovers.

155. *Himantopus himantopus*. Black-winged Stilt.

Common in winter. Latest date—about the middle of May at Wadali tank Amraoti. Earliest date October 15th Karunja tank. Between these dates they were seen on one occasion on June 19th when a party of ten were at the edges of Kamgaon tank.

156. *Tringa hypoleucus*. Common Sandpiper.

Common in winter. Usually solitary at the edges of any kind of water. Latest date May 2nd a pair that had practically lived at a tiny water scoop till then had disappeared. Earliest date September 10th.

157. *Tringa ochropus*. Green Sandpiper.

Common winter visitor.

158. *Tringa glareola*. Wood Sandpiper.

Common in flocks at the edges of tanks. Latest date April 1st.

159. *Erolia minuta*. Little Stint.

In flocks at the edges of tanks in winter. I may have confused these last two Sandpipers.

160. *Tringa stagnatilis*. Marsh Sandpiper.

At Karunja tank in January.

161. *Tringa nebularia*. Green Shank.

At Kamgaon tank and one or two other tanks in winter. The Red Shank was not noticeable though it was probably overlooked.

162. *Capella gallinago*. Common Snipe.

Not very plentiful. Latest date March 27th. On January 5th at Karunja tank, three birds were wading in water breast deep. They all progressed in the same direction plunging in the long bill downwards with a curious bobbing movement. My knowledge of the different snipe being very lacking these may have been some other kind.

163. *Sterna aurantia*. Common River Tern.

Some at Karunja and Kamgaon tanks.

164. *Sterna melanogaster*. Black-bellied Tern.

Only one seen at Karunja tank. No Terns were noticed during the hot weather or rains.

165. *Phalacrocorax niger*. Little Cormorant.

Fairly common in all tanks during the winter and hot weather. Usually perched with the Common Cormorant.

166. *Phalacrocorax carbo*. Common Cormorant.

More common than the Little Cormorant. Perched on submerged stumps and trees. Till the first week in June they were in full force at Kamgaon tank, the evening flights inland were always punctual. With the break of the rains the large majority seemed to disappear from all tanks very few remaining. No nesting colonies on submerged trees were seen. They gradually returned to the tanks from about September 10th.

167. *Anhinga melanogaster*. Indian Darter.

Common on tanks. Very few during the rains.

168. *Threskiornis melanocephalus*. White Ibis.

A small party at Karunja tank made their headquarters on a mud spit with storks and herons during January and February. At Kamgaon tank a party was established on one area at the edge of the tank in May and June. By July none were to be seen by any of the tanks. The Black Ibis appeared to be absent.

169. *Platalea leucorodia*. Spoon-bill.

A small party were at Karunja tank on several occasions in January. They had not been there before and were not noticed anywhere after.

170. *Dissoura episcopus*. White-necked Stork.

A resident, often at the margins of tanks in open cultivated country or soaring high.

171. *Ardea cinerea*. Common Heron.

Resident, but very few seen during the rains. In May two pairs at Wadali tank Amraoti spent much of their time in trees further inland. In winter they were common at all the tanks. A very large edition of the Common Heron was at Karunja tank in December and January.

172. *Ardea purpurea*. Purple Heron.

At most of the tanks this bird was not a skulker, and was usually seen standing in the most open parts as other herons. Only once at Shegaon tank was it flushed from reeds. At Wadali tank Amraoti a solitary bird was resident from December till the beginning of the rains. None were seen during the rains.

173. *Egretta arzetta*. Little Egret.

Always solitary about streams, rivers and pools.

174. *Bubulcus ibis*. Cattle Egret.

Very common in winter and the hot weather. In April they were in close attendance on villagers dragging the muddy remains of tanks for fish and almost having to be pushed out of the way. About May they assumed breeding plumage. At the end of June when the rains set in they disappeared from all water areas. On September 27th at Kamgaon tank a small party were making for their usual corner of the tank. By October they were back everywhere in full force.

175. *Egretta alba*. Large Egret.

Fairly common, always with cattle egrets at tanks. They also disappeared during the rains.

176. *Ardeola grayii*. Paddy Bird.

Common.

177. *Nycticorax nycticorax*. Night Heron.

Occasionally seen flying from bushes overhanging rivers in daylight.

178. *Butorides striatus*. Little Green Heron.

Sometimes noticed by streams.

179. *Nettapus coromandelianus*. Cotton Teal.

A resident in small numbers.

180. *Dendrocygna javanica*. Whistling Teal.

Not very common and none were observed during the hot weather.

181. *Anas platyrhynchos*. Mallard.

Winter visitor in small numbers. The majority were seen at a tank near Chandur Bazar.

182. *Anas pœclorhynchos*. Indian Spotbill.

A few at Karunja tank in winter. None noted as resident.

183. *Anas strepera*. Gadwall.

Common winter visitor to most of the tanks.

184. *Anas penelope*. Widgeon.

Winter visitor. Noted on Karunja tank only in January '40. In November '40 they were on most of the tanks, especially Kamgaon and Shegaon as one of the commonest duck.

185. *Anas crecca*. Common Teal.

Common winter visitor.

186. *Anas querquedula*. Garganey.

Common winter visitor seen in small numbers till about March when there appeared to be a large increase just when other ducks were disappearing. A large flock appeared at Wadali tank Amraoti on March 11th and remained till May 2nd. Till this date large flocks were seen on nearly all tanks.

187. *Dafila acuta*. Pintail.

Winter visitor in small numbers. In March and early April. At Wadali tank Amraoti two pairs kept to themselves. On April 21st a solitary male remained and was not seen again. On June 19th at Kamgaon tank a pair was with some Cotton Teal and was seen again a fortnight later.

188. *Spatula clypeata*. Shoveller.

Winter visitor. In small scattered numbers on Karunja tank during winter. In March and April the numbers greatly increased; quite large flocks appearing on most of the tanks especially Shegaon and Lonar; they were then in breeding plumage. Latest date April 21st; a solitary bird, the remains of a small flock at Wadali tank Amraoti.

189. *Aythya ferina*. Pochard.

Winter visitor in small numbers to most of the tanks, on January 28th at Chandur Bazar tank was the largest number noted.

190. *Netta rufina*. Red-crested Pochard.

Uncommon winter visitor, a few pairs were at Karunja tank in October '40.

191. *Aythya rufa*. White-eyed Pochard.

Winter visitor. In November '40 there were many on the Chandur Bazar tank.

192. *Aythya fuligula*. Tufted Duck.

The only occasion noted was on April 24th a solitary male on Wadali tank. It remained in the middle of the tank well away from a flock of Gargany that were the only other duck present. May 1st was the latest date it was seen.

193. *Podiceps ruficollis*. Little Grebe.

Common resident. In May with the departure of duck they became much more noticeable, and large flocks collected on most patches of water.